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Gilbert Urges Congress to Ban Out-of-State Waste

Trash Poses Long-Term Health and Environmental Risks, Gilbert says

(LANSING) – State Senator Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac, has co-sponsored a Senate resolution urging Congress to enact legislation that gives states the authority to ban out-of-state solid waste.

“I find it unacceptable that the most beautiful state in the country has become one of the largest importers of trash from other states and countries such as Canada,” Gilbert said. “I am urging Congress to enact legislation that will allow states to ban the import of foreign trash so that Michigan will maintain a healthy, clean environment for our future generations.”

Michigan has become one of the largest recipients of imported solid waste in the country. Approximately 15 percent of all trash dumped in landfills in Michigan now originates elsewhere.

The amounts have increased significantly in the past several years, and recent reports of a major contract with Ontario and the closing of the nation's largest landfill in New York seem to indicate this situation will only become a bigger issue in the future.

According to the resolution, accepting unlimited volumes of trash from outside Michigan is a serious long-term commitment. Long after the money from the contract has been spent, there is a threat to the environment and an obligation to monitor sites to protect water and health.

“It makes logical sense that any state accepting these long-term health risks should be able to regulate what comes across state lines for disposal,” Gilbert said.

Copies of Senate Resolution 4 will be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.